



# RHUMB LINES

*Straight Lines to Navigate By*



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## Supreme Court Accepts Navy's Sonar Request

*"My primary job is to ensure that Navy ships in the Pacific are prepared to fight and win in combat. These restrictions make it very difficult to conduct the kind of realistic, integrated training exercises that ensure the combat effectiveness of our force."*

**- Vice Adm. Samuel J. Locklear, Commander, U.S. Third Fleet**

Today the Supreme Court agreed to review a preliminary injunction that restricts the Navy's ability to train realistically with sonar off the coast of Southern California. The preliminary injunction was issued by the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles and later affirmed by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

### Getting us to the Supreme Court decision

- Filing the appeal with the Supreme Court was the Navy's last judicial option to seek relief from the restrictions in the preliminary injunction.
- The Navy petition argued that the Ninth Circuit's February 29 ruling conflicts with the judgment of Congress, the President and the nation's top naval officers, as well as previous decisions of the Supreme Court.
- The Navy already undertakes extensive measures to protect marine mammals and comply with all relevant environmental statutes. This is an issue that is essential to national security and Supreme Court review is warranted.

### America needs sonar to maintain safe global commerce

Global economic prosperity depends on stable trade between nations.

- Ninety percent of the world's commerce, including 43 million barrels of oil per day, travels over the seas supporting the global supply chain.
- Dozens of navies around the world—including those with hostile or unknown intent—possess and continue to obtain diesel-electric submarines, many of which are modern and ultra quiet. These vessels pose a serious threat to national security, the safety of our armed forces, global commerce, and our nation's economic vitality.
- Active sonar is the most effective means available today to detect, track and target modern subs under all ocean conditions.

### Anti-submarine warfare competency is achieved through realistic training

The ASW training plan, including the use of active sonar in at-sea training scenarios, is vital to training sonar operators, maintaining proficiency and ensuring the Navy retains a credible capability to combat a submerged threat.

- ASW certification is achieved by building skills over time using synthetic and live training, beginning in the classroom and progressing to integrated operations.
- Operators must be certified at each level to progress effectively up the training ladder. Classroom and simulator training works at the basic phase, but live training at sea, using the same tools that will be available when forward deployed, is required to progress to the unit level, then integrated training, and finally joint strike group training.
- The ASW training process is a set of building blocks, but critical training must be accomplished underway, at sea and with live tools. Simulators cannot achieve the same results. Additionally, ASW skills deteriorate quickly and constant training is necessary to maintain proficiency.

### Key Messages

- We cannot in good conscience send American men and women into potential trouble spots without adequate training to help defend themselves.
- We take extensive measures to protect marine mammals during our sonar training exercises.
- The Navy also protects the ocean highways, which are vulnerable to diesel-electric submarines that are obtained cheaply, easily and in growing numbers.

### Facts & Figures

- Nearly 3 million marine mammals were killed in fishing nets from 1996-2006. In the same period, only five stranding events and 37 deaths have been linked scientifically to sonar.
- Since January 2007 when the NMFS-approved protective measures were instituted, no marine mammal strandings have been linked to the U.S. Navy.
- The U.S. Navy is a leading sponsor of marine mammal research, spending \$26 million in FY08, which includes efforts to understand the relationship between sound and marine mammals.